(d) the steps taken by Government to check the delay in construction of projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) As on 30th September, 1999, the original cost of 446 projects on the monitor of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation costing Rs. 1,09,995 crores is now anticipated to cost Rs. 1,55,656 crores.

(c) The reasons for delay vary from project to project. The reasons include: administrative & procedural delays; delay in land acquisition, delay in award of work contracts, failure of civil contractors, delay in supply of equipment, faulty implementation procedures and unresponsive monitoring system.

(d) The steps taken by Government to check the delay in construction of projects include: (i) Monthly as well as Quarterly monitoring by the Government. This enables the monitoring agencies to identify constraints and help the management in taking remedial measures; (ii) In-depth critical reviews of the progress by the project authorities and Administrative Ministries, and coordination with the respective State Governments, equipment suppliers, contractors, consultants and other concerned agencies; (iii) Reviewing status of fabrication of equipment with suppliers as well as turnkey contractors; (iv) Inter-Ministerial coordination and holding facilitation meetings among concerned parties; (v) Setting up of Empowered Committee for speedy finalisation of contract packages, solving of land acquisition and other problems; and (vi) Making funds avaiiable to complete the projects on schedule.

Formulation of job oriented schemes in hilly areas of NER

1643. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission have issued instructions and directions to various Departments of Government for formulation/ preparation job oriented schemes/programmes in the hilly areas of the country particularly in the hilly areas of NER including North Cachar district;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have consulted the State Government and Autonomous Councils of the concerned State regarding this proposals;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what steps are being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Gap between rich and poor

†1644. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the gap between the rich and the poor has widened in India during the last five years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action being taken by Government to remove this gap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission estimates the number and percentage of poor from the large sample surveys on consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The last such survey was conducted in 1993-94. As such, it is not possible to ascertain change in the gap between the poor and the non-poor during the last five years. However, comparing two latest

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.